



TOWN OF BARRINGTON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of the Town Administrator

TO: Barrington Planning Board
FROM: Conner MacIver, Town Administrator
SUBJECT: Map 223 Lot 26 – Town Hall Lot Amendment
DATE: Friday, July 2, 2021

Members of the Barrington Planning Board,

Please accept this letter as the narrative to support the requested amendment for 223-26 & 24-RC-19 Amended-Sub which was originally conditionally approved on August 18, 2019, and the amended approval was issued November 9, 2020. The purpose of the requested amendment is to waive the conditions on the Town Hall lot (C1) which will allow the Town to begin construction of the Town Hall project which was approved in March of 2019.

We have worked with the owner and applicant to prepare the requested amendment. Specifically, the applicant requests the Planning Board's consideration of an amendment to the conditionally approved 62-lot subdivision in order to waive the conditions on the Town Hall lot (C1) prior to full approval of the larger development which would allow conveyance of the lot. The Town is facing an expiring lease agreement and a tight timeline on \$500,000 in direct federal funding. Please review additional background and details of this request below.

In September of 2018, the Select Board was presented with a proposal to acquire a portion of Map 223 Lot 26 for a new Town Hall. The Select Board met with development representatives and discussed the proposal among themselves. The Board concluded that the proposal would be mutually beneficial. The Town would benefit from having a cost-free and undeveloped piece of land to build a Town Hall and stop renting commercial space. The development project would benefit from having the residential access road pass by stable municipal development. On October 24, 2018, the two parties came to terms on an offer of land pending voter approval for a Town Hall project. The Select Board has remained appreciative of the generous offer and community-minded nature of the development.

In March of 2019, the Town was successful in achieving a supermajority of support for a new Town Hall project on the land offered as part of the proposed development. Over the proceeding months and years, the development project achieved Planning Board approval and subsequent amendment. Additionally, the Town Hall project has been fully designed, permitted, and prepared for construction. The approvals for the proposed Town Hall include Planning Board, Alteration of Terrain, and septic.

Despite everyone's best efforts the development project has experienced continued delays in meeting the conditions of the Planning Board's conditional approval. The NHDOT permit is close to issuance, but additional permits are required from NHDES (Alteration of Terrain) and State



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Subdivision. Based on the current backlog and staff shortages, it is reasonable to expect many more months before all conditions of the development's conditional approval are met. These delays have been detrimental to the development project and the Town's construction project. The Town was forced to extend the lease at the rented Town Hall through June of 2022. Additionally, construction costs have continued to rise.

Recently, the Town Hall project was selected by Congressman Pappas to be submitted for direct federal funding of \$500,000. You can find details here: <https://pappas.house.gov/cpf>. Continued delays will result in losing access to this funding source.

The requested amendment to the subdivision approval of Map 223, Lot 26 would allow the Town to begin construction. Specifically, the amendment asks the Planning Board to waive the conditions on the Town Hall lot (C1). If approved, this would create the Town Hall lot and allow conveyance. Once the Town owns the lot, construction would begin without further delays.

As part of the conveyance, the Town would secure an access easement along the portion of Signature Drive abutting the Town Hall lot. In order to start construction, the Town would need to take access from Route 125. In conversations with NHDOT, they are comfortable with the Town using the proposed subdivision drive as the construction entrance. The Town will need to establish a temporary service or secure a permanent service directly from Route 125. Consideration will be given to the current and future location of utility poles. Additionally, it is possible that the Town Hall would be completed prior to completion of the subdivision access road. The Town is willing to accept this risk with the proper access protections in place. The Town has had conversations with NHDOT and NHDES and neither organization anticipates issues with permitting the Town's temporary or permanent (if needed) access.

We believe that pursuing an amendment to the conditionally approved subdivision is in the Town's best interest. The Town is up against a lease agreement deadline and stands to lose \$500,000 in federal funding if the construction does not start soon.

Sincerely,

Conner MacIver